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New Initiative Aims to Increase Crime Reporting in NIBRS

While most law enforcement agencies continue to submit their crime data to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program via the Summary Reporting System (SRS), the FBI and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) aim to change that through the National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X). The goal of the NCS-X, which was initiated in June 2013, is to accelerate the pace that agencies join in to report their statistics through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

In the 1980s, the FBI's UCR Program launched the NIBRS, a modernized alternative to submitting crime data via the traditional SRS. NIBRS enriches the quality of UCR data collected by allowing agencies to capture detailed information on each single crime occurrence.

Through the NCS-X, the FBI and the BJS plan to share with the nation's law enforcement agencies the wealth of data that can be collected in each incident via the NIBRS, and the benefits these data can have for each. The data collected in NIBRS include crimes (murder, rape, robbery, etc.) that have routinely been reported to law enforcement in the nearly eight and a half decades of the UCR Program, as well as crimes that have been increasingly brought to the attention of law enforcement, such as hate crimes and domestic abuse. NIBRS is also structured to collect specific information on the victims and offenders of all crimes. (The SRS is able to capture only victim and offender data concerning homicide.)

Reporting these more complete, incident-based accounts of crimes equips agencies with vital information needed for law enforcement administration, operation, and management. For example, NIBRS captures expansive data on drug activities, such as whether an offender was suspected of using drugs during the commission of another offense; the type and quantity of drugs seized in an incident; as well as the age, sex, race, and ethnicity of offender(s) and arrestee(s) of drug violations. This information is also beneficial to those who sit outside of law enforcement, but have an interest in the scope of crime in America. Criminologists,

FBI Director James B. Comey Endorses NIBRS



"I believe that NIBRS is the pathway to better data—to richer data—that we can all use to have informed conversations about the most important issues we face. But I also hope you'll give me feedback—you'll give us feedback—about other ways to collect that data, if there are better way[s] to incentivize people to collect that data. We need that advice and that feedback. But there is no escaping, we must do better and collect information so we can have informed conversations in this country about the most important work we do. So I'm going to make it my personal mission to continue to push to get us better data so we can have better conversations."

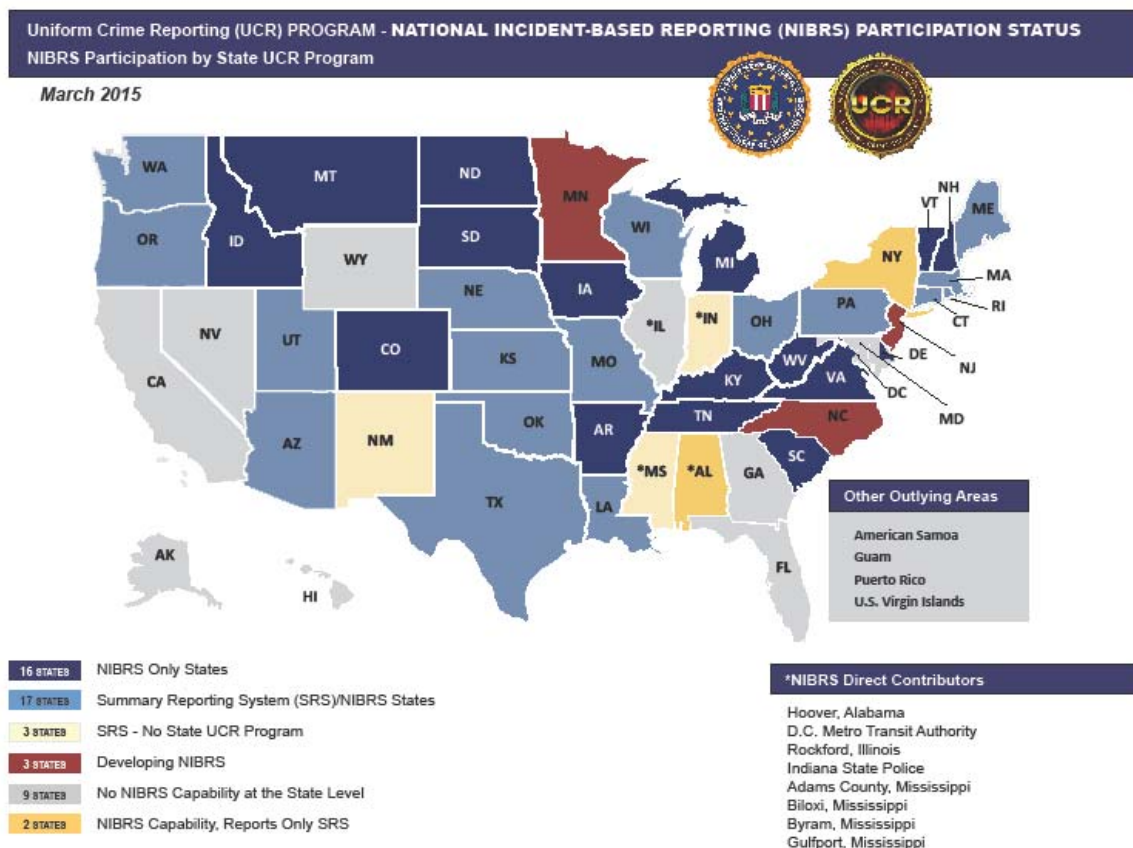
-FBI Director James B. Comey in his March 13 address to the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (i.e., NOBLE) in Atlanta Georgia

sociologists, legislators, municipal planners, the media, and other students of criminal justice use the data for varied research and planning purposes.

Where NIBRS is and where NCS-X wants to be

Currently, 33 states are certified to report data via the NIBRS, and 16 of these states include agencies that report all of their crime statistics through the incident-based reports. Nationwide, approximately 6,300 agencies (one-third of those that participate in the UCR Program) submit data via the NIBRS, while the rest report data in the summary format.

The NCS-X Team is working with agencies, such as the Chicago Police Department and the DC Metro Police Department, and has commitments from the states of Minnesota, New Jersey, and North Carolina that are developing incident-based reporting systems. However, that is just the start. The NCS-X Team's goal is to expand participation by combining data from existing NIBRS participants with data from a scientific sample of 400 additional agencies, which includes 72 of the nation's largest agencies. When aggregated, the increase in NIBRS participants will generate nationally representative crime statistics that will provide a clearer, more complete picture of the nature of crime in the United States. The more comprehensive data will also better prepare law enforcement agencies to fight crime within each of their jurisdictions.



Want to know more about NCS-X or NIBRS?

For questions about how an agency or state can participate in the NCS-X initiative, please contact Kevin Strom by telephone at (919) 485-5729.

To learn more about NIBRS, please contact Drema Fouch, NIBRS Coordinator, with the FBI's UCR Program by telephone at (304) 625-2982 or by e-mail at drema.fouch@ic.fbi.gov.

To view the NIBRS publications, go to www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats.

Dispositions Aid in Preventing Unauthorized Access to Biological Agents and Toxins

From research and manufacturing to transfer and usage, thousands of individuals across the United States handle biological agents and toxins every day. In fact, food and medical industries depend on these individuals' responsible management of such materials. To help ensure that Biological Select Agents and Toxins (BSATs) are not accessible to those who may represent a threat to the United States' interests, the FBI's Bioterrorism Risk Assessment Group (BRAG) screens individuals applying for positions that deal with them. In making eligibility determinations, the Personnel Security Specialists (PSSs) in the BRAG rely on the criminal history records maintained at the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division—and, ultimately, the law enforcement and criminal justice agencies that submit them—for the most complete and accurate information.

The CJIS Division formed the BRAG in March 2003 as a result of the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-188), also known as the Bioterrorism Act. Part of that act involves conducting security risk assessments (SRAs) of individuals who possess, use, or transfer biological agents and toxins.

How an SRA works

Any individual who handles any agent or toxin that could conceivably be used to make a weapon of mass destruction or that could cause terror must undergo an SRA, and approved individuals must reapply every three years. An applicant fills out a three-page form that includes date of birth, place of birth, and country of citizenship and sends the information, along with their fingerprints, to the BRAG.

Upon receipt, a PSS researches the information provided using the CJIS Division's databases, such as the National Crime Information Center, the Interstate Identification Index, and the

Prohibitors for Access to BSAT

An individual can be denied access to BSAT for the following reasons:

- Being under reasonable suspicion of having committed a federal crime of terrorism
- Having involvement with an organization that engages in domestic or international terrorism
- Being an agent of a foreign power
- Being under indictment for a crime punishable by a term that exceeds 1 year
- Having a conviction in any court for a crime punishable by a term that exceeds 1 year
- Being a fugitive from justice
- Being an unlawful user of any controlled substance
- Being an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States
- Being an alien (other than a lawfully admitted alien for permanent residence) who is a national of a country that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism
- Being adjudicated as a mental defective or having been committed to any mental institution
- Having been dishonorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces.

Next Generation Identification. Additional databases checks are conducted using information provided from other governmental agencies, such as the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Veterans Affairs to determine if the applicant should be denied access or granted limited access to specified agents.

If an applicant's name and descriptive information match any records in the databases, a PSS further researches the applicant to determine his or her eligibility. In some cases, this can involve calling a local law enforcement agency to determine whether the criminal history records being reviewed include the most complete information available on the applicant, (e.g., disposition or want/warrant information). Considering all of the available data and the list of prohibitions for granting access (see sidebar), the PSS determines the individual's eligibility and returns the results of the SRA to the sponsoring agency which notifies the applicant of whether access is granted or denied. Responses are sent to one of two sponsoring agencies, the Centers for Disease Control or the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (which is part of the United States Department of Agriculture).



The gravity of these determinations further demonstrates how imperative it is that law enforcement and criminal justice agencies submit their information to the CJIS Division in a timely manner. Concerning notifications and requests for information, BRAG supervisor John E. Strovers says, "If you hear from us, please respond quickly because it is a national security issue."

By the numbers

BRAG supervisor John E. Strovers estimates that the BRAG receives about 100 applications a week, and staff try to return each SRA within 45 days; most are completed within 30 days. PSSs conduct checks of the computer systems expeditiously, although some research requires more time. A lack of disposition information often requires the BRAG staff to reach out to law enforcement agencies.

From its inception through mid-February 2015, the BRAG staff conducted more than 56,000 SRAs and denied 338 individuals from possessing BSAT. Although that is less than 1 percent of the total number of applicants, percentages cannot quantify the importance of having prevented these 338 people from gaining access to biological agents or toxins and the potential harm averted.

Agencies with questions should contact the BRAG by telephone at (304) 625-4900.

BUSTED...With the Help of NICS

NICS Inquiry Leads to Subject's Apprehension

In January 2015, a legal instruments examiner with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Section processed a transaction for a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) regarding a long gun purchase. The NICS examiner identified a match based on descriptive data in the NCIC and researched the transaction. The NCIC entry contained a warrant issued in January 2015 by a sheriff's office for aggravated assault with a weapon. The NICS examiner contacted the sheriff's office, where staff confirmed the active warrant. Based on the information received, the NICS examiner provided the FFL with a deny status. Two hours later, the sheriff's office contacted the NICS examiner to request the address of the subject; deputies had attempted to apprehend the subject at the FFL, but the individual had already left the store. Later, the sheriff's office advised the NICS Section that they had apprehended the subject.



Powering Investigation beyond Your Jurisdiction

*It's all too familiar—too many cases and not enough time to follow up. If only there were a way to run all of the entities (i.e., persons, places, things, and events) associated with those cases through a national information sharing system! Now, thanks to the power of the FBI's **National Data Exchange Program (N-DEx)**, law enforcement and criminal justice agencies have a resource at their fingertips to do that and more. (This article provides an overview of N-DEx and how N-DEx can help your agency. Future articles will address specific tools and capabilities in more depth.)*

Launched by the FBI's CJIS Division in March 2008, the N-DEx is the nation's only investigative tool that contains data from local, state, tribal, and federal justice systems. N-DEx provides the ability to share, search, link, and analyze information by removing jurisdictional and geographical limitations. This integration of roughly 243 million records from more than 5,000 criminal justice agencies offers a secure platform through which law enforcement can access case reports, records, and information on nearly 1.7 billion entities in a real-time manner.

N-DEx Basics

Share. N-DEx works closely with law enforcement and criminal justice agencies (CJAs), ranging from local to federal levels, to configure their N-DEx settings providing a secure method for information sharing. Contributing agencies always maintain ownership and have control over what data they share, who can access it, and under what circumstances. Individual users must be part of a contributing agency.

Search. N-DEx gives CJAs, such as police officers, investigators, and correctional officers, the ability to search millions of records from across the entire criminal justice system in seconds. These records include incident and case report information; arrest, booking, and incarceration data; mug shot and booking photos; field contact and interview records; and supervised release, probation, and parole data. With these records, N-DEx provides officers with immediate information on an individual, notifying the officer of any criminal record, association, and past interactions with law enforcement.

Discover. New agencies are joining N-DEx and new data are being submitted to the system daily. The N-DEx subscription feature allows the discovery of new information, leads, and connections between investigations. N-DEx automatically and continuously searches for possible connections between investigations and provides notifications when new information related to an investigation enters the system or when other criminal justice personnel search for the same people, places, things, events, and key words. This powerful capability can greatly aid investigations through continuous data discovery and deconfliction with other investigations.

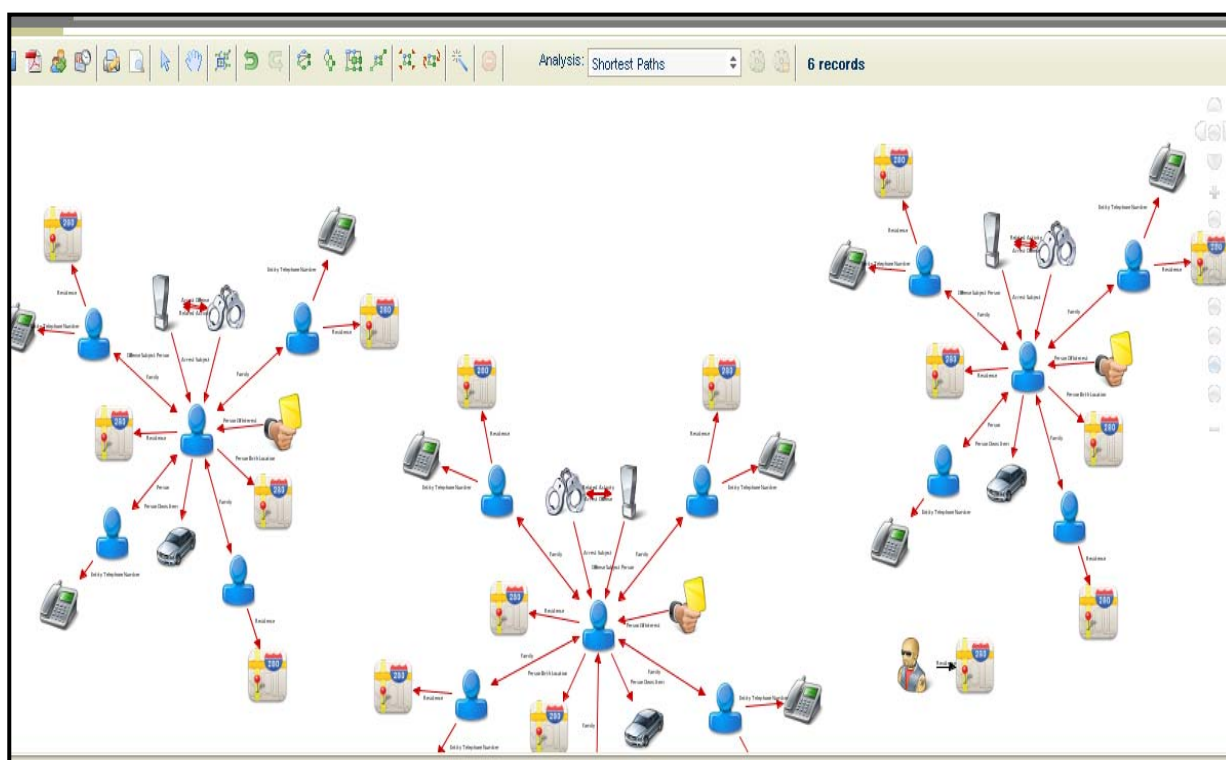


Figure: N-DEx shows linkages among data.

Link. In addition to helping find suspects and identify victims, the tools and features within N-DEx help uncover connections and relationships between people, locations, and crimes. One such use might help corrections personnel find connections between inmates, visitors, and parolees as they consider an inmate's classification pending his release. Another tool can help visualize and diagram relationships that not only enhance their investigative information, but also can detect patterns and unknown relationships between those records.

Analyze. Based on details such as an individual's criminal involvement, a crime's characteristics, or an event's time and date of occurrence, the N-DEx's analytical tools can illustrate investigations, geographically depict crime trends and occurrences, and visualize connections between crimes or events. The value of such connections was demonstrated when the search for a missing person reported in one California county turned up an individual incarcerated in a nearby county, effectively helping to close a case that had been ongoing for 2 years. Filters can further limit searches and pinpoint relevant case information so users can view hot spots and identify areas with the highest crime rates.

A Platform for Collaboration

Users who establish connections between their case and a similar case at another agency can use N-DEx to simply exchange additional case reports or to arrange meetings between the agencies to coordinate investigations. This collaboration tool allows investigators anywhere to connect, share information, and transfer files regardless of their location. Users can also create subscriptions based on their searches so the N-DEx will notify them when other users are searching for information on cases (both ongoing and past) with similarities, identifying new links and relationships.

The Benefits of Using N-DEx

N-DEx is an investigative, operational, and tactical resource that enhances public safety. With access to immediate data, N-DEx offers the entire criminal justice community increased situational awareness and a more in-depth understanding of the people with whom they interact. It also helps agencies track and view crime trends in and around their jurisdictions, allowing them to more efficiently allocate resources and efforts. By creating better communication and collaboration between agencies, N-DEx also magnifies the reach and intensity of investigations beyond jurisdictional borders.

Make the Connection

Obtaining access to N-DEx is simple for criminal justice agencies. Contact the N-DEx Program Office via e-mail at ndex@leo.gov for the details.

2014 N-DEx “Success Story of the Year”

Thousands of Cartons of Counterfeit Cigarettes Discovered



In September 2014, the Maryland State Police (MSP) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) were selected as the winners of the inaugural National Data Exchange N-DEx Program “Success Story of the Year” award. The Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division chose the recipients based on their integral use of the system’s data to connect a seemingly routine situation with a larger ongoing investigation. The details of the case that lead to the award follow.

On June 8, 2012, two troopers with the MSP stopped a tractor trailer hauling three rented storage units for a traffic violation. The information that the truck driver provided during the stop confirmed that he and the tractor trailer were legitimate.

However, the information on the bill of lading (a document issued by a carrier that details a shipment of merchandise and gives title of that shipment to a specified party) raised questions concerning one of the storage units that the tractor trailer was delivering. When the troopers used information from the bill of lading to search the Law Enforcement Information Exchange, i.e., LInX, and the N-DEx, they discovered that the renter of one of the units was the subject of a major ATF investigation involving cigarette trafficking.

The troopers contacted an ATF agent about the ongoing investigation. The agent told the troopers that the renter of the storage unit was the main target of a major counterfeit cigarette ring investigation. Following their discussion with the agent, the troopers allowed the truck to continue to its scheduled delivery, and agents with the ATF planned to wait for the shipment to arrive in New York.

When it arrived, the renter of the storage unit and an associate entered the unit. Then, ATF agents stepped in and discovered approximately 3,000 cartons of counterfeit cigarettes inside it.

Upon further investigation, ATF agents learned that the renter was allegedly part of a scheme created by Joseph Ruda, owner of Gutlove and Shirvint, Inc. of Long Island City, New York. Ruda shipped more than 58,000 cartons of untaxed cigarettes from New York to Kentucky where they were mailed to other states. Ruda’s company also shipped untaxed cigarettes to various smoke shops in New York that immediately sent them to a smoke shop on Long Island where the cigarettes were resold in bulk to cigarette bootleggers in New York City.

On September 17, 2013, Ruda and his corporation plead guilty to violating the Jenkins Act (which regulates mail-order sales of cigarettes) as well as to the charge of Conspiracy to Commit Contraband Cigarette Trafficking of more than 58,000 cartons of untaxed cigarettes. Ruda and Gutlove and Shirvint, Inc., agreed to forfeit their profits from the scheme and pay a \$600,000 judgment to the United States

government. The corporation also made restitution of more than \$1.4 million to the state of New York and Ruda personally forfeited \$325,000 in cash to the government prior to sentencing.

In February 2014, Ruda was sentenced to three years of probation and his company was put out of business.



2014 N-DEx Success Story of the Year Award recipients:

From left to right, Detective Sergeant John Hall (MSP), Acting N-DEx Unit Chief John C. Quinlan, Agent Stephen Dickey (ATF), Sergeant Matthew Murphy (MSP), Trooper First Class James Ward (MSP), CJIS Deputy Assistant Director Randall Thyse, Asset Forfeiture Investigator Gail Donaldson (ATF), ATF Forensic Auditor Bill Maslakowski (ATF), and Resident Agent in Charge, Buffalo Field Office, NY Field Division Frank Christiano (ATF).

Need to Know

UCR Program Quarterly Available on the LEEP

The national Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program replaced the *UCR State Program Bulletin* and *UCR Newsletter* with the *UCR Program Quarterly* to provide state UCR Program managers and direct contributors with the latest information about the program. Current and past editions of the *UCR Program Quarterly* are available on the FBI's Internet site at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr-program-quarterly> and via the UCR Program's Special Interest Group (SIG) on the Law Enforcement Online (LEO) SIG Service of the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP). To access the *UCR Program Quarterly* on the LEEP:

- ❖ Click on the SIG logo
- ❖ Click on the Browse SIGS link
- ❖ Click by Access Type and select Unrestricted
- ❖ Click on the UCR logo
- ❖ Click on the UCR Program Quarterly folder

Users with questions concerning access to the LEO and the LEEP should contact the LEO Operations Unit by telephone at (304) 625-5555.

CJIS Information Letters Available on the LEEP

CJIS Information Letters provide the users of CJIS systems and services with policy and procedural updates. The newsletters are available on the CJIS SIG on the LEO SIG Service of the LEEP. To access the *CJIS Information Letter* on the LEEP:

- ❖ Click on the SIG logo
- ❖ Click on the Browse SIGS link
- ❖ Click by Access Type and select Unrestricted
- ❖ Click on the General Information tab
- ❖ Click on the Newsletters and Reports link
- ❖ Click on the CJIS Informational Letters link

Users with questions concerning access to the LEO and the LEEP should contact the LEO Operations Unit by telephone at (304) 625-5555.

Stay Linked

Sign Up for Your Alert Today!

Available exclusively online, the *CJIS Link* provides information about system enhancements, training opportunities, policy changes, and successes to CJIS system users across the law enforcement, national security, and intelligence communities. Be sure to visit www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis to sign up for e-mail alerts that let you know when new editions become available.

To share your feedback, success stories, and article suggestions to make this newsletter even better, e-mail the *CJIS Link* staff at CJIS_LINK@ic.fbi.gov.

FBI Offers Active Shooter Resource Page on LEEP

Law enforcement agencies seeking resources to prepare their officers to handle an active shooter incident can access the FBI's Active Shooter Resource Page on the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP) to find studies, videos, guidebooks, and other information on the subject. The page serves as a clearinghouse for relevant information from the FBI, as well as from law enforcement agencies and academics across the nation. The resources available on LEEP cover multiple angles of the issue, including training opportunities, crisis management, victim assistance, and media relations.



It is with good reason that the [White House](#) and many local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies have emphasized preventing and preparing for active shooter events. A [study](#) conducted by the FBI and Texas State University concerning active shooter incidents that occurred from 2000–2013 found that, on average, the frequency of such incidents more than doubled when comparing the first seven years studied with the final seven years. The study reports that incidents were often over quickly and highlights the need for prevention efforts, as well as training community members how to respond. The Active Shooter Resource Page includes materials discussing strategies to mitigate threats and to prepare civilians to react to an active shooter in public places like shopping malls and schools.

Need access to LEEP?

The FBI's Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP) is available to those affiliated with local, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies. More information about the [LEEP](#) is available on the FBI's web site. In addition to the Active Shooter Resource Page, users are granted access to other beneficial resources such as virtual command centers, investigative tools, special interest groups, and intelligence centers.

One of the training programs highlighted on the Active Shooter Resource Page is ALERRT, or the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training. This program is becoming a national standard for active shooting response and incorporates tactical best practices and lessons learned from previous active shooter incidents. More than 40,000 law enforcement officers have already participated in ALERRT, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

The link to the Active Shooter Resource Page can be found on the LEEP home page under the scrolling list of services. Please note: some of the materials on the page are law enforcement sensitive and should not be distributed to the general public. The FBI's Critical Incident Response Group offers [active shooter resources](#) available publicly on the FBI's web site. (Some resources are on both [www.fbi.gov](#) and LEEP.)

ACTIVE SHOOTER

160

Incidents between 2000 & 2013*

486

Killed

1,043

Casualties

557

Wounded

The FBI, as part of a White House initiative, has been tasked with ensuring that the country's law enforcement agencies are prepared for active shooter and mass casualty incidents.

WHAT IS AN ACTIVE SHOOTER?

An individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.

INFO LAW ENFORCEMENT CAN USE

On the LEEP at www.cjis.gov
(Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal)

- General Resources
(which can also be found on FBI.gov)
- Crisis Resources
- Victim Resources
- Studies from LE perspective
- Training and Videos
 - threshold evaluation
 - concepts and principles of team movement
 - room entry techniques
 - approach and breaching the crisis site
 - rescue team tactics

Information and Links to ALERRT

Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) is a training program for first responding patrol officers funded by the U.S. DOJ's BJA that has trained more than 40,000 law enforcement officers and has been adopted by multiple states as a standard for active shooting response.

45.6%

of incidents occurred at a place of commerce

INFO EVERYONE CAN USE

On www.fbi.gov:

- Videos
Including *Run, Hide, Fight: Surviving an Active Shooter Event*
- Studies
- Guides

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cirg/active-shooter-and-mass-casualty-incidents>

*From the FBI report, *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 and 2013*, Texas State University and Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington D.C., 2014.